

being tried at the same time. The main issue—did the accused commit the criminal act?—is within the province of a common jury, if honestly selected, but the second is not. An ordinary jury is certainly not competent to decide whether a man was insane at the time of the committal of a crime, or at any other time, except in the most obvious instances. In all cases in which there is any shadow of doubt the question should be relegated to a jury of experts, nominated by the judge. Our judicial procedure gives a precedent for this in the jury of matrons. This would avoid the conflicting testimony of experts so humiliating to our profession, and would avoid that very unsatisfactory procedure by which one or two experts appointed by the Home Office revise the decision of the jury at a later stage. This latter arrangement does not, and should not, command the confidence of the public. These specialists practically decide the question of life or death in a manner that is directly opposed to the principle and practice of our legal procedure—by avoiding all publicity. That their overruling of the judge and jury is commonly correct may be true, but circumstances are conceivable in which this procedure might be abused. In any case this mode of settling an important judicial decision by a secret medical report to a Home Secretary, who, being a politician, is probably not judicially minded, is a very halting method of arriving at justice.

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*The Registration of Asylum-trained Nurses.*

The appeal to the Medico-Psychological Association to support the petition on behalf of asylum-trained nurses has been most thoroughly successful.

The petition has been signed by more than 7000 persons, and is a record that cannot be ignored in any legislation on this subject.

Two bills are before the House, but it is very improbable that either of them will be passed in the present session; and, as before pointed out, it is very doubtful if registration will ever be carried. In any case this Association can claim to have supported the interests of asylum-trained nurses with promptitude and vigour.

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